



**Meditation for the
27th and 28th February 2021**

2nd Sunday of Lent
Gospel according to Mark 9: 2-10

After our story in the desert last week, we're changing the scenery: this time on top of a mountain. In biblical imagery the mountain is the meeting place with God, like with the story of Moses on Mount Sinai, where he receives the Tablets of the Law, or Elijah on Mount Horeb, when he can hear God "in a gentle whisper". So here, Jesus goes to meet God with Peter, James and John. The story specifically tells us that only those three are taken. So, what about the others? Did Jesus have special friends? Jesus needs this special alone time with some of his faithful friends, just as we do: those friends who stay faithful through good times and bad. And as we'll see, this is a story that precedes some of those trying times.

If you look at your own story, what would you call those high mountains in your life? With whom did you share them?

What are those friendships that have stood firm through difficult times?

Jesus is transfigured: his clothes turn resplendent, he is surrounded by Moses and Elijah, two great figures of the Old Testament. Moses, sent by God to free the People from slavery, has received the Tablets of the Law. Elijah is the prophet faithful through adversity: the Jews in Jesus' time awaited his return. Then comes the cloud with the voice that was heard before at Jesus' baptism: "This is my beloved son, listen to him." In the text just before this one, Jesus asks of his disciples: "Who do people say that I am?" (Mark 8: 27) On this day, Jesus, on the high mountain, surrounded by his friends, receives the reply to this question. And this scene also brings to mind another one, another mountain on the outskirts of Jerusalem, that later will host three crosses, and where Jesus will not be transfigured but disfigured.

Looking back on the story of your week, what aspect of Christ touches you the most: Jesus transfigured? Jesus disfigured? For you, in what way is Jesus' radiance manifest? How can you transmit the light you receive from him?

Face to face with the transfigured Jesus, the disciples cannot remain unmoved. The story tells us how afraid they are. Peter dares to speak: "Rabbi, it is good that we are here! Let us build three tents..." Even if the text suggests that Peter is speaking without knowing what to say, what he does say is important in two ways: it shows he recognises that something good has happened, and that desire for the situation to last. But what will follow for Jesus' friends will be a journey downwards, both figuratively and literally. It begins with a concrete return to normality: "They saw only Jesus there alone with them." Then the journey down the mountain will be followed by the road that Jesus goes on to take. As St Paul says to the Philippians: "he humbled himself, by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2: 8)

Look at the "downward journeys" that you have experienced. What normality were you confronted with then?

How did the Lord accompany you on this journey?

Going down the mountain, the disciples are brought face to face with an incomprehensible future, and so Jesus tells them not to talk about what they have seen. The mystery of the Transfiguration must go together with the Passion and the Resurrection. The disciples respect Jesus' wishes whilst asking themselves what "rising from the dead" can mean.

Look at your way of believing in and trusting God: what do you understand today about this mystery of death and resurrection?

What touches you about the journey that Jesus undertakes?

Sr Anne Peyremorte

"If you knew the Gift of God!"

Bearing in mind the Word of God that we have just listened to, ask yourself what God's gift to you is to take into your week

- a high mountain
- friendships that stand firm through difficult times
- Jesus' radiance
- downward journeys where God is with me
- belief in the resurrection
- other:

How do you wish to respond to this gift?